

My Life in Japan and Research in Kyushu University

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The experience of being a Ph.D. student at Kyushu University is valuable and full of challenges in my life, and I want to share the precious memories with all of you. I am a doctoral student studying in the supervise of Professor Kitahara. The research I am doing now is about the application of machine learning in optimization.

When I first went to Fukuoka in the fall of 2019, just like some of you who have only studied abroad, anxiety and upset-filled my heart. I am worried about whether I could adapt to a foreign country's life, whether I could enter the research state as soon as possible, whether the professors and students got along well, etc. But everyone I met was enthusiastic and friendly, and I quickly adapted to life in Japan. Since my Japanese was not very good when I first came, the people around me had been very patient to help me solve the problems I encountered in life and study.

Unfortunately, four months after I came to Japan, the COVID-19 swept the world. This pandemic that had caused considerable losses to the world had affected many people's health and lives. My life had also changed. To reduce cross-infection that may occur in close contact between people, I try to avoid unnecessarily going out. The way of learning has changed from face-to-face lectures to online lectures. Despite such a severe epidemic, due to the university had made a good response in both study support and financial support, my research life is proceeding smoothly.

Now I want to talk about my study and research at Kyushu University. Research plays the most important role in my life since I have enjoyed my academic work so far, and I really want to be an independent researcher. My educational background may be a little different from that of students in the Department of Economics. I am a science and engineering student with my bachelor's and master's degrees. In the beginning, I was apprehensive about whether I could adapt to my study life here as a transfer student. But there are so many research directions you can choose from Economics Department. I find some of the faculty members do some research related to the connection with mathematics and economics, which is in line with my research interest, especially the research being done by Professor Kitahara. Finally, I choose Kitahara sensei as my

supervisor. Kitahara sensei discussed the future research plan with me in the first semester and asked me about the research direction I was interested in. He also bought many related books for me to read.

At first, I always wanted to publish a paper in international journals. Is it a bit too eager for quick success and instant benefits? In our weekly seminar, I need to do a presentation about the paper I read this week. Through in-depth analysis and advice from my professor, I realized that I need to learn enough related knowledge and read enough new papers in my research fields in the first year. The accumulation of learning in my research field is the prerequisite for me to publish papers independently in the future. Ph.D. is not easy, and I need to cultivate my vision in research instead of self-study. At the same time, as a researcher, it is necessary to have the ability to find problems independently and to explore and solve problems in depth.

I am only in the first year of my Ph.D., so I am still continually absorbing new knowledge and approaching the true meaning of research. I remembered when I attended the interview for the entrance examination, one of the professors asked me what I want to do after my Ph.D., I answered that I don't know what I really want to do in the future, but I definitely know that the experience during my Ph.D. will help me identify that. And I still believe that my experience at Kyushu University will help me find my way in the future.